

The Road to Clean Cities – Steps to Designation

So You'd Like to Join the Clean Cities Program...

Becoming a designated Clean Cities coalition is a long-term process. Building a coalition, securing stakeholder commitments, and creating a detailed action plan take time. And unfortunately, there is no one template for prospective Clean Cities to follow that will guarantee designation. To be effective, each coalition must tailor its plan to serve its own geographic region, population, and market. The good news is that your hard work will almost certainly pay off when you're ready to implement your ideas. A strong foundation and solid program plan will help to ensure your success. Just ask any recently designated Clean Cities coalition!

Below is a general outline of the steps to receiving a Clean Cities designation.

1. Build a coalition of interested stakeholders
2. Assess your local or regional alternative fuel market—identify AFV fleets, potential AFV fleets, and refueling stations
3. Work to ensure a strong market foundation—build stakeholder commitments
4. Create a program plan that describes the AFV market and outlines the coalition's goals, as well as the action steps stakeholders will take to reach the goals
5. Submit to DOE for review, revise plan as necessary
6. Celebrate designation

Your “application” to the Clean Cities Program is your program plan, which describes your coalition and the local market, as well as your goals and objectives. The plan should be submitted to DOE through the appropriate Regional Office. Working closely with your DOE Regional Clean Cities Manager will help ensure your success—he or she can provide valuable insight based on previous experiences with coalitions throughout the region. The Clean Cities Web site provides a list of all of the DOE Regional Office contacts at www.ccities.doe.gov/contacts/regional/shtml. *The Roadmap to Clean Cities*, available at www.ccities.doe.gov/roadmap.shtml, outlines program plan criteria.

Clean Cities Program Plan Helpful Hints

How you structure your plan is up to you—it is your coalition's tool. Program plan should, however, incorporate the following elements: background, AFV market overview, goals and objectives, coalition organization, stakeholder lists. DOE can provide you with a standard Memorandum of Understanding to accompany your program plan. Your Regional Clean Cities manager can give you examples of program plans written by recently designated coalitions, which may be useful as an overview to get a feel for what's expected. Please remember, though, that the plan is your tool and should be tailored specifically to address your local AFV market.

Below are some helpful hints to keep in mind when developing and refining your program plan.

Background: This is the opportunity to boast about all the great things your coalition has done since its inception. Be sure to include the following:

- How did the group get together—what sparked the interest in Clean Cities?
- What has the coalition accomplished so far? Brief descriptions of coalition projects and other successes should be included.
- Who are the primary market players in the area? Which stakeholders operate the most vehicles? Who has led the infrastructure effort? Who has been the most active in public outreach?
- What is unique to the area? Don't assume we know—please include everything!
- Some coalitions use their plan as a stakeholder recruitment tool and include detailed background information and specific data to describe U.S. imported oil dependency and the need for alternative fuels. Although very informative and an appropriate supplement to the plan, such description is not required.

AFV Market Overview – Current and Projected AFVs/Refueling Sites: Many coalitions provide a narrative overview of the local AFV market, with specific information about each fuel. All coalitions must include AFV and refueling/recharging site charts that illustrate the current and projected numbers of vehicles and stations in the region.

DOE awards a Clean Cities designation to recognize a coalition's demonstrated commitment to AFV market development. One of the most important measures of that demonstrated commitment is the current and continued use of AFVs (and alternative fuel) in stakeholder fleets. Stakeholder AFVs and stakeholder-owned infrastructure comprise the foundation upon which your coalition can build and succeed. While the Clean Cities Program can help a coalition grow and thrive, a solid market foundation must already exist; otherwise the potential to successfully sustain that market is diminished. The vehicle and refueling/recharging site charts are therefore two of the more important elements of the plan—they provide a picture of the local situation, as well as the stakeholders' commitments to developing the AFV market. As such, please try to make the charts as clear and as easy to follow as possible. Stakeholders and EPACT fleets should be identified; please also distinguish between light-duty vehicles and medium- and heavy-duty vehicles.

Vehicle and station projections should be at least five years in the future and should be based on specific stakeholder commitments. Best estimates or wish lists are helpful, but specific commitments are a better gauge of potential success and indication of which organizations are truly on board with the coalition's plan.

Goals: Clean Cities coalition goals should reflect the national program priorities (remember: the top priority is to increase the use of AFVs and alternative fuel). The other focus areas include fleet/stakeholder identification and recruitment, public outreach, AFV legislation, and grants/fundraising. Coalitions should note that specific and quantifiable goals are the best way to measure success (for example, "Increase the Number of AFVs by 75% by 2005").

Objectives: Objectives comprise the coalition’s plan of action. They are a way for the National Clean Cities staff to learn about what your coalition plans to do and how it will do it, so the more detail, the better. What are the steps working groups and stakeholders will take to reach each goal? Who will be responsible for doing what? If the coalition plans to develop a public outreach campaign, what are the elements of the campaign? Who is the target audience? Avoid words like “encourage” or “support” unless an additional explanation is included to define exactly what they mean. For example, if the objective is to encourage fleets to purchase OEM AFVs, how will the coalition do that? Will stakeholder X coordinate one-on-one meetings for fleets with OEM representatives and a local fuel provider? Objectives should answer the “how?” or “who?” questions. The more specific the plan of action, the easier it is to move forward and implement ideas in the long run.

“Must Have” Lists: (1) *EPACT Fleets* – be sure to include, by name, the fleets in your area that must comply with EPACT mandates. This can be done easily on the vehicle summary chart. (2) *Stakeholder Information* – who are the active members of the coalition and how can they be reached? Please include names, organizations, phone/fax numbers, and E-mail addresses (if available). A brief description of the organization and what it brings to the Clean Cities table is also helpful, particularly if the company’s name does not clearly indicate its mission.

Good luck!

Program plan development resources:

1. DOE Regional Clean Cities Managers
2. Clean Cities Web site – www.ccities.doe.gov
 - www.ccities.doe.gov/contacts/regional.shtml -- contact information for each of the DOE Regional Office Clean Cities Managers
 - www.ccities.doe.gov/roadmap.shtml -- guidebook to becoming a designated Clean Cities coalition; outlines program plan criteria
 - www.ccities.doe.gov/toolbox.shtml -- a one-stop resource shop for all Clean Cities coalitions; includes AFV presentations, sample media kits, and a variety of other tools
3. Other recently designated coalitions
4. DOE-Washington, DC – contact: Christy Ficker, christy.ficker@ee.doe.gov; 202-586-1885